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Punitive Action Against Libya Deferred

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8 — President Reagan conferred about Libya with his top advisers for a second day today but sent word to the Senate that he did not favor any anti-Libyan legislation until the deliberations were concluded.

After meeting with the National Security Council this morning and afternoon — he also met with the group on Monday — Mr. Reagan was still reported to be weighing punitive economic and political actions against Libya. David R. Gergen, communications director of the White House, said a decision was expected "in the near future."

In the Senate, Democrats had been seeking a nonbinding resolution backing a boycott of Libyan oil, but they called off the move when the White House interceded.

Punitive actions against Libya have taken on special significance because of the Administration's firm belief that Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, the Libyan leader, has sent agents to this country to assassinate President Reagan or other senior officials.

'Evidence' Still Withheld

Despite strong questioning by reporters, Mr. Gergen again refused to make public what he called "the serious evidence" of an assassination plot.

Mr. Gergen seemed irked at the skepticism in some of the questions and in some newspaper articles.

"I personally find it astonishing that people think that we somehow would go through this exercise unless we took it seriously," Mr. Gergen said. "We are not engaged in some public relations ploy here. It's specious to suggest that. We are not trying to blow up this whole story."

"This matter is serious," he added.

Mr. Gergen also asserted that press accounts of the assassination plot had not been instigated by the Administration.

"They are not deliberate," he said. "There is no orchestrated effort by this Administration to orchestrate these leaks. The White House has made very clear to the heads of various departments and agencies that the President personally condemns the leaks."

State Department officials say Mr. Reagan is discussing an economic boycott of Libya and bringing home the approximately 1,500 Americans working in Libya, primarily in the oil industry.

Some Americans Return

There is concern, the officials said, that Libya might hold the Americans hostage if an oil embargo was announced suddenly or dramatically. The Administration has asked Americans to return home voluntarily, and about 1,000 of the 2,500 who were there have left since May.

Senator Charles H. Percy, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said his committee might hold closed-door hearings on the Libyan situation next week. Committee hearings had been scheduled for Wednesday but were canceled today when the Administration said it was not ready to make known its decisions.

Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig

Jr., who participated in the National Security Council meetings today and on Monday, was certain to discuss the Libyan situation with key European allies on an 11-day trip abroad starting tonight. He is to attend the winter meeting of foreign ministers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Mr. Gergen said the Administration had informed some allies of the intelligence information it says it has on the assassination plots.